

Henry Ford

Henry Ford was an American hero. He was self-taught machinist and engineer whom many say changed America forever. In 1903, he founded the Ford Motor Company, a small company that manufactured automobiles.

After examining scientific management theories and studying the philosophy of efficient production as presented by Frederick Winslow Taylor, Ford changed his automobile manufacturing practices. Taylor was an efficiency expert who developed a new concept of labor that reduced the requirement for human expertise in an efficient manufacturing environment. In 1906, Ford borrowed Taylor's ideas and used them to change how his organization manufactured automobiles. Ford was the father of mass production techniques--the assembly line--which significantly changed the way people worked, the automobiles it manufactured changed the way people traveled.

Ford's implementation of the assembly line made automobiles affordable to the average American. His model T, otherwise known as

the Tin Lizzie, became the foremost mass-produced product in the world. Mass production became the unifying theme for the American industry in the early 1900's and beyond.